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# EIU 4192G-099: Film and Contemporary Society, Honors Senior Seminar

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**EIU 4192G, section 099:**  
**EIU Honors Senior Seminar in Film & Contemporary Society**  
**Spring 2019 | Coleman 1255 | Wednesdays 3-6:20 PM**

**Instructor:** Dr. Robert Martínez

**Office:** Coleman 3371

**E-mail:** [rlmartinez@eiu.edu](mailto:rlmartinez@eiu.edu)

**Office Hours:** T/TH 11 AM-2 PM and by appointment

**Class Websites:** D2L course page and [www.martinezliteraria.com/eiu4192](http://www.martinezliteraria.com/eiu4192)

**Course Description:**

EIU 4192G-099 (4-0-4, FS) is an EIU Honors Senior Seminar in Film & Contemporary Society. In this course, we will study some of the theory, aesthetics, history, and cultural contexts of film, concentrating on the relationships among film, literature, popular culture, music, and the arts. Students will explore the ways in which we read film and culture from around the world, and the ways in which we write about film. The spring 2018 iteration of this seminar will emphasize how cinema from around the world asks us to think critically about central problems facing contemporary society, such as the problem of evil and violence, the ethical quandaries facing us during times of war or conflict, our complicated relationship with technology, and philosophical meditations about love, gender, and life in modern cities. This course is writing intensive and not open to English majors. (Note: This EIU Honors Senior Seminar requires student completion of at least 75 semester hours and does not fulfill the English Junior Seminar required of English majors.)

**Course Learning Objectives:**

- Students will exercise their abilities to summarize and synthesize information from scholarly sources of various disciplines and from interdisciplinary materials (writing, critical thinking).
- Students will have opportunities to make oral presentations of these summaries and syntheses (speaking).
- Students will learn to conduct interdisciplinary film research using both primary and secondary sources (critical thinking).
- Students will learn how to communicate these research findings in oral and written form (writing and speaking).
- Students will learn to research, study, analyze and compare films from their own culture and those of other cultures (critical thinking).
- Students will learn the importance of film studies in understanding cross-cultural interactions (citizenship).
- Students will learn the importance of film studies as a basis for social action (citizenship).
- Students will learn the significance of film as an integrated art form.
- Students will learn the significance of contemporary film to a study of contemporary culture and society.

**Required Texts & Films:**

- Bernard F. Dick, *Anatomy of Film* (6<sup>th</sup> edition) at TRS
- Selected readings on D2L
- Oliver Stone, *Platoon* (1986)

- David Mackenzie, *Hell or High Water* (2016)
- László Nemes, *Son of Saul* (*Saul fia*; 2015)
- Michael Haneke, *The White Ribbon* (*Das Weisse Band*; 2009)
- Wim Wenders, *Wings of Desire* (*Der Himmel über Berlin*; 1987)
- Alan Pakula, *The Parallax View* (1974)
- Don Siegel, *Dirty Harry* (1971)
- Jen and Sylvia Soska, *American Mary* (2012)
- Eskil Vogt, *Blind* (2014)
- Hal Hartley, *Amateur* (1994)
- Michael Powell, *Peeping Tom* (1960)
- Michelangelo Antonioni, *Blow-Up* (1966)
- Sophia Takal, *Always Shine* (2016)
- Ingmar Bergman, *Winter Light* (1963)

### Screenings in and Readings for Class:

You are required to attend all class film screenings and to do all assigned reading for this course. More importantly, you are expected to read all assignments and watch all films **carefully** and **conscientiously**, meaning you are to make note of your reactions to the readings/films and be prepared to share your critical thoughts and interpretations of the works we cover. If you do not understand something in the reading, you should read it again and work at its meaning; likewise, if something about a film is perplexing, watch it again and think about it carefully. This process is what is known as “critical reading” and “critical thinking”: you must study a writer’s language or filmmaker’s films and think critically about its meanings and ramifications.

The text listed above is available from Textbook Rental (TRS). Other required readings will be available online via our course page on D2L. On the day that a text is to be discussed, you must have that work with you in class. For **electronic readings (PDF or Web documents)**, you must have readable access to those documents in class on the day the material is discussed. Since this course emphasizes careful reading and writing, you must either print out the document(s) or use a laptop, desktop, iPad, Kindle, or Nook to view them. *Using Smartphones to view readings for class discussion is not acceptable, unless directed to do so by the instructor.*

### Required Attendance, Materials & Editions:

- Check Panthermail (e-mail) **daily**
- Sign-up for and use “Remind” app for class texting
- Use text editions found at Textbook Rental
- Attend class and participate daily in discussion
- Attend all film screenings
- Complete all forum posts
- Additional readings via handouts or D2L

Attendance in EIU 4192G means that you are present in class each day in both *body and mind*—that is, I expect you to come to class each day having completed any required reading or listening or viewing assignments and ready to share your thoughtful, considered ideas. **Missing class and not completing assignments are not acceptable.** If you become ill or experience family or personal difficulties beyond your control, then you must notify me of your absence as soon as possible. Not completing daily assignments and not

contributing to class discussion will result in poor participation grade scores. If you miss more than three (3) classes, your final course grade will be penalized: starting with the fourth (4th) absence, a "+" or "-" will be deducted from your final course grade.

**Smartphone/Social Media Policy:**

To protect the safety of the classroom and the privacy of the students, usage of cell phones or smartphones during class to videotape, to text, and to access social media sites or apps (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, etc.) **is strictly forbidden**. Smartphone or cell phone use during class will only be permitted with the prior approval of the instructor.

**Grading of Assignments:**

- Four (4) Analysis Task essays (3-4 pages each): 20%
- Film Note-taking Log: 10%
- General Participation, class discussion, possible quizzes: 10%
- Forum posts for each film (250-400 words per post): 10%
- Group Project Oral Presentation: 20%
- Research Term Paper (10-12 pages): 30%

**Grading Scale:**

- A = 94-100
- A- = 90-93
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 84-86
- B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 74-76
- C- = 70-73
- D = 60-69
- F = below 60

**Turning in Assignments & Feedback:**

Assignments turned in via D2L Dropbox must be in **Microsoft Word format**. Instructor feedback will be embedded in graded writing. Be sure to review and save your graded essays. One of your most important tools for improvement will be the comments and corrections I make in or suggest to your writing. *If you wish to see your writing improve and your grade rise as the semester progresses, you must carefully refer back to these written comments as you write subsequent essays.*

**Guidelines for Specific Assignments:**

All written work should be formatted thus:

- Use Microsoft Word
- Use Double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or Cambria font
- Use 1" (top/bottom) and 1.25" (left/right) margins
- Include your name, course name, professor's name, and date on the front page
- Include a title for your essays
- Place your name and page numbers in the headers of your essays
- Turn in all written work electronically via D2L Dropbox
- Film Note-taking Log must be turned in hard copy (print out or use notebook)

**A Note about Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of someone else's ideas, words, or work as your own. If you use or refer to ideas or work other than your own, you must acknowledge the source and author of those ideas/that work and document it properly using MLA format (Purdue MLA guide: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>). Plagiarism is an Honor Code violation at EIU, and offenders will be referred to the EIU Office for Student Standards. **Failure to cite any outside sources or critics will constitute plagiarism.**

Most assignments will receive letter grades. For shorter assignments, the following check-mark system may be used:

- ✓+ = Excellent work that is strongly engaged, on-topic, and very well written.
- ✓ = Satisfactory work that is on-topic and cleanly written.
- ✓- = Below average work that shows little engagement, is off-topic, and is hurriedly and poorly written.

**Student Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

**Disability Services:**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call [217-581-6583](tel:217-581-6583).

**Student Success Center:**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call [217-581-6696](tel:217-581-6696), or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

**Tech Support:**

If you need assistance with D2L, call D2L Support toll free at 1-877-325-7778. Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. E-mail and Chat options are also available on the "My Home" page after logging in to D2L. Other D2L resources including a D2L Orientation course for students are available on the same page. For technical questions regarding other software, hardware, network issues, EIU NetID/password, or Panthermail, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 217-581-4357 during regular business hours (8 am-5 pm) or submit a help ticket at <https://techsupport.eiu.edu/>. If you have a question regarding course content, contact your instructor.

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**Spring 2019 | Tentative Class Schedule\***

**\*Please note:** This schedule is *tentative*; activities or readings are subject to change depending on class progress.

Date	What We'll Do in Class	Homework
Wed., 1/9	Discuss course policies and syllabus  Cultural & Intellectual background to contemporary society  Discuss how film creates representation and meaning	- Read "Sound" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 36-50) - Read "Mise-en-Scène" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 86-98) - Read "The Shot" in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 51-63) - Read sections on shots and editing in <i>Anatomy of Film</i> (pp. 69-83) - Complete online assignment assessing film excerpts - Assign Discussion Leaders for films
Wed., 1/16	1. Discuss examples of film techniques  2. Unit I - "[T]o show something is to ennoble it"? Representing War on the Screen: Watch Stone's <i>Platoon</i>	- Read excerpt regarding Francois Truffaut's response to cinema and "The Algerian Tragedy" (D2L) - Read "Introduction" to <i>War on the Silver Screen</i> (D2L) - Read "Introduction" to <i>War Cinema</i> (D2L)
Wed., 1/23	1. Discuss <i>Platoon</i> and assigned reading  2. Unit I- "[T]o show something is to ennoble it"? Representing War: Watch Nemes's <i>Son of Saul</i>	- Read Jean-Michel Frodon's "Intersecting Paths: How cinema has confronted the tragedy of the 20th century" (D2L) - Read Dennis Lim's "'Kapò': Portraying the Unthinkable in Art" (D2L)  Review film options for Group Presentation project (see handout)
Wed., 1/30	1. Discuss <i>Son of Saul</i> and assigned reading  2. Unit II - Individual Identity and Modern Society: Watch Antonioni's <i>Blow-Up</i>	- Read excerpts from Guy Debord's <i>Society of the Spectacle</i> (D2L) - <b>Turn in (D2L Dropbox) choices for group project</b>
Wed., 2/6	1. Discuss <i>Blow-Up</i> and assigned reading  2. Unit II - Individual Identity and Modern Society: Watch and discuss Siegel's <i>Dirty Harry</i>  <b>Analysis Task #1 Due in D2L</b>	Read Pauline Kael's "Saint Cop" and other critical reviews (D2L)
Wed., 2/13	1. Discuss <i>Dirty Harry</i> and assigned reading  2. Unit II - Individual Identity and	

	Modern Society: Watch Pakula's <i>The Parallax View</i>	
Wed., 2/20	1. Discuss <i>The Parallax View</i>  2. Unit II - Individual Identity and Modern Society: Watch Mackenzie's <i>Hell or High Water</i>	
Wed., 2/27	1. Discuss <i>Hell or High Water</i>  2. Unit III – Sources of Evil, Spectacles of Sexuality: Watch Haneke's <i>The White Ribbon</i>  <b>Analysis Task #2 Due in D2L Dropbox</b>	
Wed., 3/6	1. Discuss <i>The White Ribbon</i>  2. Unit III – Sources of Evil, Spectacles of Sexuality: Watch Powell's <i>Peeping Tom</i>	Read Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (D2L)
Wed., 3/13	<b>No Class – Spring Break</b>	
Wed., 3/20	1. Discuss <i>Peeping Tom</i> and Mulvey's essay  2. Unit III – Sources of Evil, Spectacles of Sexuality: Watch the Soska Sisters' <i>American Mary</i>  <b>Analysis Task #3 Due in D2L Dropbox</b>	- Read Carol Clover's "Her Body, Himself" (D2L) - <b>Précis/Annotated Bibliography for Research Term Paper due in D2L by Friday, 3/29</b>
Wed., 3/27	1. Discuss <i>American Mary</i> and Clover's essay  2. Unit III – Sources of Evil, Spectacles of Sexuality: Watch Sophia Takal's <i>Always Shine</i>	<b>Reminders!</b> - <b>Be working on Research Term Paper!</b> - <b>Be organizing your Group Presentation project!</b>
Fri., 3/29	<b>Précis &amp; Annotated Bibliography for Term Paper due in Dropbox</b>	
Wed., 4/3	1. Discuss <i>Always Shine</i>  2. Unit IV – Love, Life, the City: Watch Wim Wenders's <i>Wings of Desire</i>	<b>Reminders!</b> - <b>Be working on Research Term Paper!</b> - <b>Be organizing your Group Presentation project!</b>

Wed., 4/10	1. Discuss <i>Wings of Desire</i>  2. Unit IV – Love, Life, the City: Watch Eskil Vogt's <i>Blind</i>  <b>Analysis Task #4 Due in D2L Dropbox</b>	<b>Reminders!</b> - <b>Be working on Research Term Paper!</b> - <b>Be organizing your Group Presentation project!</b>
Wed., 4/17	1. Discuss Vogt's <i>Blind</i>  2. Unit IV – Love, Life, the City: Watch and discuss Hartley's <i>Amateur</i>	<b>Finalize group projects!</b> <b>Be working on Research Term Paper!</b>
Wed., 4/24	<b>Last Day of Class</b> Course evals <b>Group Presentations</b>	<b>Research Term Paper is due Wednesday, May 1, in D2L by 10 PM.</b>